

CLAIMS

1. A method for synchronizing a network manager to a network agent in a communications network, in which managers maintain data unit copies of data units of their respective agents, the method comprising the steps of:

- 5 storing a first value, which is unique for each data unit, in the agent;
storing a second value, for indicating a number of changes to the associated data unit, in the agent;
storing a third value, for indicating who initiated a respective last change, in the agent;
10 storing a copy of each of the first, second and third values for each data copy in the manager;
comparing the copy of the first, second and third values stored in the manager with the respectively associated first, second and third values stored in the agent; and
synchronizing each data copy, whose copies of the first, second and third
15 values stored in the manager do not match the associated first, second and third values stored in the agent, to the associated data unit stored in the agent.

2. A method for synchronizing a network manager to a network agent in a communications network as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of comparing is
20 carried out during access to the data copy which is stored in the manager.

3. A method for synchronizing a network manager to a network agent in a communications network as claimed in claim 2, wherein the step of comparing is carried out whenever access is made to one of the data unit copies which are stored in
25 the manager.

4. A method for synchronizing a network manager to a network agent in a communications network as claimed in claim 2, wherein the step of comparing is carried out only once when access is, in each case, made for a first time to one of the
30 data unit copies which are stored in the manager, after one of a failure of the manager and connection of the manager to the agent.

5. A method for synchronizing a network manager to a network agent as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of comparing is carried out for all the data copies which are stored in the manager

6. A program having a plurality of software code sections, wherein execution of the software code sections effects a method comprising the steps of:

storing a first value, which is unique for each data unit, in the agent;

storing a second value, for indicating a number of changes to the associated data unit, in the agent;

storing a third value, for indicating who initiated a respective last change, in the agent;

storing a copy of each of the first, second and third values for each data copy in the manager;

comparing the copies of the first, second and third values stored in the manager with the respectively associated first, second and third values stored in the agent; and

synchronizing each data copy whose copies of the first, second and third values stored in the manager do not match the associated first, second and third values stored in the agent, to the associated data unit stored in the agent.

7. A system for synchronizing a network manager to a network agent in a communications network, in which managers maintain data unit copies of data units of their respective agents, the system comprising:

a communications network;

a network agent connected to the communications network, the network agent storing a first value which is unique for each data unit, a second value for indicating a number of changes to the associated data unit, and a third value for indicating who initiated a respective last change; and

a network manager connected to the communications network, the network manager storing a copy of each of the first, second and third values for each data copy, wherein the copies of the first, second and third values stored in the manager are compared with the respectively associated first, second and third values stored in the network agent, and each data copy whose copies of the first, second and third values

stored in the manager do not match the associated first, second and third values stored in the agent is synchronized to the associated data units stored in the agent.

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